

SBC Baptist Faith and Message: Returning to Our Roots
~ *What Does the BF&M Teach on the Inerrancy of the Word of God* ~

“He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.” (Isaiah 40:29)

For the first time in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention its institutions have embraced the erroneous doctrine that the Word of God; our Bible has errors.

~ See SB paper, [Letter to a Pastor](#) ~

Question?

- Does our SBC Baptist Faith and Message teach the Word of God; our Bible is 100% pure; inerrant?

Answer

- Yes!

Illustrated

- [SBC 2000 Baptist Faith and Message excerpt \(emphasis and brackets mind\)](#):
 - **“The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired** (Doctrine of Divine *Inspiration*) and is God's revelation of Himself to man.

It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, **and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy.** It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, **and will remain to the end of the world** (Doctrine of Divine [Providential] *Preservation*), the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried.”
- The Doctrine of the Divine *Inspiration* of the *Original*:
 - The SBC BF&M articulates the Doctrine of the Divine *Inspiration* of the *original* of the Word of God, our Bible which reveals God gave the Holy Scriptures 100% pure; inerrant as received in the *original* when it states; **“The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired.”** ([2 Timothy 3:15-17](#); [2 Peter 1:19-21](#))
- The Doctrine of the Divine [Providential] *Preservation* of the *Copy*:
 - It also articulates the Doctrine of the Divine [Providential] *Preservation* of the *copy* of the Word of God, our Bible which reveals God has keeps the Holy Scriptures 100% pure; inerrant as preserved in the *copy* to all ages when it states; **“It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction... ..without any mixture of error, for its matter... Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy... and will remain to the end of the world.”** ([Psalms 12:6-7](#))

Our Baptist Heritage on Inerrancy of the Word of God

We can be proud of our rich Baptist heritage, in our faithful witness to the *Biblical* and *historical* doctrine of inerrancy. It's *Biblical* in that it's revealed in the Word of God ([Psalms 12:6-7](#)), and *historical* in that it's confirmed by the witness of the saints as memorialized in our first adopted Confession of Faith, the [Philadelphia Confession of Faith 1742](#), as affirmed by [Timothy and Denise George](#), a couple prolific in the history of the Southern Baptist history when they state (emphasis mine):

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- “The Philadelphia Confession of Faith was transplanted to the Charleston Baptist Association in South Carolina. It soon became the most widely accepted, definitive confession among Baptists in America, both North and South. Each of the 293 “delegates,” as they were then called, who gathered in Augusta to organize the **Southern Baptist Convention in 1845, belonged to congregations and associations which had adopted the Philadelphia/Charleston Confession of Faith as their own.**” (Timothy & Denise George, Introduction, Baptist Confessions, Covenants, & Catechisms, Broadman & Holman, 1996)

[Philadelphia Confession of Faith 1742](#) excerpts on the Inerrancy of the *Original* and *Copy* of the Word of God, our Bible:

- Chapter 1 Section 8 Of the Holy Scripture (emphasis and brackets mind):
 - “The Old Testament in Hebrew, (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek, which (at the time of the writing of it) was most generally known to the nations, **being immediately inspired by God** (Doctrine of Divine *Inspiration* of the *original*), **and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic** (Doctrine of Divine [Providential] *Preservation* of the *copy*); so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal to them.”
- The Doctrine of the Divine *Inspiration* of the *Original*:
 - The [Philadelphia Confession of Faith](#) articulates the Doctrine of the Divine *Inspiration* of the *original* of the Word of God, our Bible which reveals God gave the Holy Scriptures 100% pure; inerrant as received in the *original* when it states; “**Being immediately inspired by God.**”
- The Doctrine of the Divine [Providential] *Preservation* of the *Copy*:
 - It also articulates the Doctrine of the Divine [Providential] *Preservation* of the *copy* of the Word of God, our Bible which reveals God has keeps the Holy Scriptures 100% pure; inerrant as preserved in the *copy* to all ages when it states; “**And by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic** [a genuine original- [Webster](#)].”

Question?

- Given the above, why then are we teaching the ministers in our SBC seminaries that the *copy* of the Word of God; our Bible has errors as articulated in the [Chicago Statement](#) which was produced by the [SBC leadership](#) and affirmed by the [Board of Trustees](#) of our largest seminary, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Illustrated

- [Chicago Statement: Transmission and Translation](#) excerpts (emphasis and brackets mine):
 - “We amply justified in affirming, with the Westminster Confession, a singular providence of God in this matter and in **declaring that the authority of Scripture is in no way jeopardized by the fact that the copies [Bible] we possess are not entirely error-free.**”
 - “**Since God has nowhere promised an inerrant transmission of Scripture, it is necessary to affirm that only the autographic text of the original documents was inspired and to maintain the need of textual criticism as a means of detecting any slips that may have crept into the text in the course of its transmission.**”

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- ***“Similarly, no translation [Bible] is or can be perfect, and all translations are an additional step away from the autographa [original].”***
- ***“Scripture is inerrant, not in the sense of being absolutely precise by modern standards, but in the sense of making good its claims and achieving that measure of focused truth at which its authors aimed.”***

Question?

- What is our responsibility and response in light of the above?

Answer

- For Pastors, Deacons, Laymen and Professors to begin teaching from their pulpits, in their Sunday morning Bible study classes and from their lecterns the *Biblical* and *historical* doctrine of inerrancy anew. The church is the one charged with custodianship of the Word of God and the greatest force in education in the Christian faith as stated in our Baptist Faith & Message:
 - [Education - Baptist Faith & Message, Article 12 excerpt](#):
“The primary setting for Christian education is the church. Actually the educational ministry of the church is probably the largest educational endeavor in the world.”

Summary

For the first time in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention our SBC institutions have embraced the erroneous doctrine that the *copy* of the Word of God; our Bible has errors, contradicting our [Baptist Faith and Message](#) consistent witness as contained in its confession on the inerrancy of the *original* and *copy* of Holy Scripture (See [SB](#) paper, [Letter to a Pastor](#)).

So Pastors, Deacons, Laymen and Professors, we have a decision to make. What do we choose to believe and teach?

The witness of God and the Saints as memorialized in the Confessions of our Baptist heritage, which all say the *copy* of the Word of God, our Bible is 100% pure; inerrant (See [SB](#) paper, [God’s Standard Bearers](#)).

Or the opposing witness of the Chicago Statement and the naturalistic Textual Critic who say the *copy* of the Word of God, our Bible is almost pure (See [SB](#) paper, [Textual Criticism 101](#)).

Conclusion

If we were asked the question, *“How do we know the Word of God, our Bible is true”*, could we answer the question?

What makes the issue challenging is we’ve not been taught the whole of the *Biblical* and *historical* doctrine of inerrancy, which rests upon two pillars: the Divine *Inspiration* of the *original*, received 100% pure; inerrant, and the Divine [Providential] *Preservation* of the *copy* kept 100% pure; inerrant.

Many know the first half; Divine *Inspiration* and might even be able to quote the proof texts of [2Timothy 3:16](#) or [2Peter 1:20-21](#). The challenge is few have ever heard the last half, Divine [Providential] *Preservation* as contained in our Confession. This is because the erroneous teaching of the [Chicago Statement](#) as eclipsed and silenced the witness of our Baptist heritage on this doctrine which is fundamental to all others.

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This is demonstrated by my church realizing this and strengthening our Confession of Faith on the inerrancy of Holy Scripture once this issue was brought to the attention of the leadership. Compare our *previous* and *present* Confessions of Faith on the inerrancy of the Word of God as follows [highlights mine]:

- [Previous Confession](#)
“The books of the Bible were written by men inspired of God’s Spirit. **Since the Bible is inspired by God, it is without error in the original writings.** Every word of it is true.”

- [Present Confession – The Bible](#)
“The books of the Bible were written by men inspired of God’s Spirit. **Every word of it is true.**”

Our church leadership removed the qualifying words **“original writings”**, contained in our previous Confession; **“Since the Bible is inspired by God, it is without error in the original writings”**, which limited inerrancy to the inspired *originals* only and did not extend inerrancy to the preserved copy, our Bible.

Now, our present Church Confession states; **“Every word of it [Bible] is true”**, which faithfully articulates the witness of the Word of God and our Baptist heritage as memorialized in our first Confession, the [Philadelphia Confession of Faith 1742](#) and the current, the [SBC Baptist Faith and Message of 2000](#) (See SB paper, [How SBC Pastors Erred](#)), which the [Chicago Statement](#) rejects.

A Call for Revival

This is a call for repentance, action and revival. A revival of the *Word* of God precedes a revival of the *people* of God, as in the days of [King Josiah](#).

- “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” [Romans 10:17](#)
- “...and how shall they hear without a preacher?” [Roman 10:14b](#)

Below is the [Inerrancy Petition](#) contained on the [Home Page](#) of the President of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary which articulates the erroneous doctrine of the [Chicago Statement](#) as noted below; limiting the inerrancy of the Word of God to the **“original text”** [manuscripts] (emphasis mine):

- “I affirm that the Bible alone, and in its entirety, is the infallible written Word of God in the **original text** and is, therefore, **inerrant** in all that it affirms or denies on whatever topic it addresses.”

This same error can be found in many of our SBC Churches Confessions of Faith on Holy Scriptures as seen below, again, limiting inerrancy to the inspired *originals* only and not extending inerrancy to the preserved copy, our Bible, following the erroneous example of our SBC (emphasis and brackets mine):

- [The Bible](#)
“We believe the Holy Scriptures, which consist of the 66 books (the Old and New Testaments), to be the only verbally inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, **inerrant in the manuscripts [originals]**, infallible, and God-breathed.
2 Timothy 3:16, 1:13; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Psalm 119:105,160, 12:6; Proverbs 30:5”

What Then Shall We Do? (See SB paper, [Preaching and Loss](#))

- Are we willing to alter the witness of the Holy Scriptures as affirmed by the saints, including our Baptist heritage as to the *Biblical* and *historical* doctrine of inerrancy, in light of the three-fold warnings of the Word of God not to do so; scriptures which we have all been taught since our youth, as shown below:

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- [Deuteronomy 4:1-4](#)
 - “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”
- [Proverbs 30:5-6](#)
 - “ 5 Every word of God *is* pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him.
6 Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”
- [Revelation 22:18-19](#)
 - “18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

Will the ‘gray headed’ Believers of our generation teach others what we’ve learned, as our fathers did for us:

- *What did our fathers teach us on the inerrancy of Holy Scripture?*
- *What will be the witness and legacy we pass to our children and generation?*
- *Will we be ‘vessels unto honor’ in helping our SBC Churches understand and repair this breach?*
 - *“O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.”*
([Psalms 71:17-18](#))
 - *“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.”* ([Isaiah 58:12](#))

God bless,

Louis

[Standard Bearers](#)

Vision

It is the [mission](#) of [Standard Bearers](#) to present the *Biblical* and *historical* doctrine of Inerrancy; teaching the Bible is 100% pure; inerrant in the *copy* which we hold in our hands today. Our goal is to strengthen the faith of Pastors, Teachers and Laymen in the authenticity and authority of the 100% pure, inerrant Word of God, knowing ~ “*So then faith cometh by hearing, hearing by the word of God*” ([Roman 10:17](#)).

Share

Prayerful consider using the resources contained in the [Standard Bearers Browser](#) for: your Sermon preparation, Bible Study class, to forward to others and post to your Social media. For more, go to the [Standard Bearers](#) home page (www.standardbearers.net) for an overview of the *Biblical* and *historical* Doctrine of Inerrancy. For another quick read see, [Retaking the Hill of Biblical Inerrancy: The Next Reformation~ The Westminster Confession Rejection of the Chicago Statement](#).

Teaching

For a presentation by [Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones, Ph.D, Th.D.](#) on any of these topics: Chronology of the Old Testament; Creation & Evolution, [Science & the Bible](#), The Identity of the Text of the New Testament or The Biblical & Historical Doctrine of Inerrancy, please contact me; Louis Kole at, kolelm@gmail.com.